

Please note the Special Town Meeting to be held on October 12, 2021, at 7:00pm at the Woodstock Middle School is a hybrid meeting, meaning it will be held via Zoom and in-person. Those eligible to vote will have the option of which to attend. Those who attend in person must follow any mask and social distancing rules that are in place. In order to attend via Zoom, electors and all others eligible to vote in town meetings in the Town of Woodstock must register with their legal name that appears on the Grand List or their voter registration card through the link below. PLEASE READ ALL OF THE ZOOM DIRECTIONS.

Register in advance for this meeting as soon as possible:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwtd-Gspz4iGdZ6Kg5Fwu5rl7A_7H9Q-Q1U

Note: The link above is the registration link only, not the meeting link. After you register you will receive a unique meeting link. This link will only work for that individual person. YOU MUST BE REGISTERED IN ORDER TO RECEIVE A MEETING LINK. REGISTRATION PRIOR TO 6 PM ON OCTOBER 12, 2021, IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE.

Voting will take place on Zoom via poll. Because of this, only those who are qualified to vote at a town meeting will be admitted into the Zoom meeting. This would mean the attendee would be a registered voter in the Town of Woodstock, OR a property owner in the town of Woodstock whose name is on the last completed Grand List with an assessment of not less than \$1,000. If more than one resident in a household is qualified to vote, they must be logged into the Zoom meeting with separate devices. Only one poll vote is allowed per device. Devices must have video and audio for voter verification. These hybrid meetings are new to all of us, but we believe it is a positive move to get as much participation as possible in town government. Please be patient as we are all learning how to do this together.

A Special Town Meeting of the electors and citizens qualified to vote in town meetings of the Town of Woodstock, Connecticut, will be held at the Woodstock Middle School Gymnasium, 147B Route 169 in the Town of Woodstock, Connecticut on October 12, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. to discuss and vote on the following:

1. To choose a moderator
2. To discuss and vote upon an amendment to the Ordinance Creating the Woodstock Agricultural Land Preservation and Land Acquisition Fund adopted May 3, 1999. A copy of the proposed Amendment IV to the Ordinance is on file in the Town Clerk's office.
3. To discuss and vote upon rescinding the Ordinance Concerning the Appointment of the Assessor, effective October 6, 1958, as the State Statute it is based on is no longer valid.

4. To discuss and vote upon amending the Ordinance Regarding Tax Abatements for Dairy Farms & Fruit Orchards, adopted June 29, 1992. A copy of the proposed Amendment II to the Ordinance is on file in the Town Clerk's office.
5. To transact such other business as may properly come before said meeting.
6. Adjourn

Dated at Woodstock, CT, this 16th day of September 2021.

Copies of the full text of the proposed ordinances and amendments are available in the Town Clerk's Office.

BOARD OF SELECTMAN

John V. Swan, First Selectman

Chandler Paquette, Selectman

Greg Kline, Selectman

ATTEST: _____, Judy E. Walberg, Town Clerk

Proposed Amendment to the Ordinance Creating the Woodstock Agricultural Land Preservation and Land Acquisition Fund Adopted May 3, 1999.

Section 3.

The Board of Selectmen shall appoint an Open Space Land Acquisition and Farmland Preservation Committee to consist of four citizens at large, one member, and one alternate each of the following: Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, Planning and Zoning Commission, Conservation Commission, Inland Wetlands Commission, Recreation Commission, and the Agricultural Committee. Alternates may fully participate in meetings and deliberations whether or not the regular member representing their commission or agency is present, but may only vote in the absence of such regular member. The persons appointed shall serve at the pleasure of the Board of Selectmen. The Open Space Land Acquisition and Preservation Committee shall elect its chairperson and secretary and shall meet periodically, but not less frequently than quarterly. Its charge shall be to identify and prioritize potential acquisitions of land or interests in land for open space or recreational or agricultural purposes, to make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen regarding acquisition of such land and other proper uses of the Land.

Proposed Amendment to the Ordinance Regarding Tax Abatements for Dairy Farms & Fruit Orchards, adopted June 29, 1992.

ORDINANCE REGARDING TAX ABATEMENTS
FOR DAIRY FARMS
Adopted: June 29, 1992
Effective: July 23, 1992

AMENDMENT I: ORDINANCE REGARDING TAX ABATEMENTS FOR DAIRY
FARMS & FRUIT ORCHARDS
Amended: May 3, 1999
Effective: June 4, 1999

AMENDMENT II: ORDINANCE REGARDING TAX ABATEMENTS FOR QUALIFYING
FARMS
Amended: October 12, 2021
Effective:

WHEREAS, the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Woodstock (Board of Selectmen) believes that the preservation of farmland and open space is vitally important to retaining Woodstock's rural character and its high quality of life; and

WHEREAS, Connecticut General Statutes §12-81m, allows towns to abate up to fifty percent of the property taxes on any of the following properties, provided such property

is maintained as a business: (1) dairy farm, (2) fruit orchard, including a vineyard for the growing of grapes for wine, (3) vegetable farm, (4) nursery farm, (5) any farm which employs nontraditional farming methods, including, but not limited to, hydroponic farming, (6) tobacco farms, or (7) commercial lobstering businesses operated on maritime heritage land, as defined in Section 12-107b of the Connecticut General Statutes (each, a "Qualifying Farm"), and to recapture abated taxes in certain circumstances in the event of a sale of the property; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Selectmen wishes to establish a mechanism whereby tax relief can be granted to Qualifying Farms, as provided by law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, that the Town of Woodstock ("Town") may abate property taxes on Qualifying Farms, and recapture taxes so abated in the event of sale, in accordance with the following procedures and requirements:

1. Any action by the Town concerning the abatement of property taxes for Qualifying Farms, or the recapture of any taxes so abated, is done pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §12-81m, as such statute or any successor statute may be amended from time to time.
2. A request for an abatement must be made by application to the Board of Selectmen and to the Town's Board of Finance (the "Board of Finance") by the record owner of the property, or tenant with a signed, recorded lease of at least three years, which lease requires tenant to pay all taxes on the Qualifying Farm as part of the lease.
3. In order for an abatement to apply for the tax year beginning July 1, of any year, the application must be submitted by October 1 of the preceding year.
4. Abatement hereunder is only available for Qualifying Farms. The applicant must provide the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance with evidence to support the status of the farm as a Qualifying Farm.

In determining whether a farm is a Qualifying Farm, the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance shall take into account, among other factors, as applicable: the acreage of the farm or orchard; the nature of the barns, other structures, and equipment on the farm; the number and types of livestock on the farm; the quantities of milk or other products sold by the farm or orchard; the gross income of the farm derived from activities directly related to the dairy farm, fruit orchard, vegetable farm, nursery farm or non-traditional farm; the gross income of the farm or orchard derived from other types of activities; and such other evidence as either the Board of Selectmen or the Board of Finance reasonably deem necessary to determine whether and, if so, to what extent the property is eligible for a tax abatement hereunder..

Residential dwellings and residential lots are excluded from this abatement ordinance.

5. Upon affirmative vote by both the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance, the Town may abate up to fifty percent (50%) of the property taxes for a Qualifying Farm.

6. Any abatement will continue in force for five years, or until such time as the property is sold, or until such time as the property ceases to be a Qualifying Farm, whichever comes first.
7. The property owner receiving the abatement must notify the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance in writing within thirty (30) days of the sale of the property or the cessation of operations as a Qualifying Farm.
8. Upon sale of the property, and subject to the provisions of section 9 herein, the property owner must pay to the Town a percentage of the original amount of the taxes abated, pursuant to the following schedule:

<u>Number of Years Sale Follows Abatement for Given Tax Year</u>	<u>Percentage of Original Amount of Taxes Abated which Must be Paid</u>
More than 10	0
Between 9 and 10	10%
Between 8 and 9	20%
Between 7 and 8	30%
Between 6 and 7	40%
Between 5 and 6	50%
Between 4 and 5	60%
Between 3 and 4	70%
Between 2 and 3	80%
Between 1 and 2	90%
Between 0 and 1	100%

9. Upon affirmative vote by the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance, the Town may waive any of the amounts which would otherwise be owed pursuant to Section 8 herein if the property continues to be a Qualifying Farm after the sale of the property or continues to be used as "farm land", "forest land" or "open space", as those terms are defined in Section §12-107b of the Connecticut General Statutes, after the sale of the property.

10. The Taxes owed to the Town pursuant to Sections 8 and 9 hereof shall be due and payable by the record property owner/grantor to the Town Clerk of Woodstock at the time of recording of her/his deed or other instrument of conveyance. Such revenue received by the Town Clerk shall become part of the general revenue of the Town. No deed or other instrument of conveyance which is subject to the recapture of tax, as set forth in Section 8 hereof, shall be recorded by the Town Clerk unless the funds due under the recapture provisions of Section 8 hereof have been paid, or the obligation has been waived pursuant to section 9 hereof.

11. The Tax Assessor shall file, not later than 30 days after abatement is approved by the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance, with the Town Clerk, a certificate for any Qualifying

Farmland that has been approved for a tax abatement, which certificate shall set forth the date of initial abatement and the obligation to pay the recapture funds as set forth in Section 8 hereof. Said certificate shall be recorded in the land records of the Town of Woodstock.